

# THE BEACON

FOR SCHOOL AND HOME

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## Chapter 6

IT was most exciting, receiving their visitors in their very own house, and even Maimie forgot that really the wigwam only belonged to Adam and Ann, for their mother seemed to include her just as if she had three chicks of her very own instead of two.

Dad said he was awfully hungry and ate five of Ann's cakes, while Mother said the strawberry jam had a beautiful flavor. She didn't seem to mind the hulls either. The tent entrance was rather low for Dad and he thought it wiser to crawl through on his hands and knees. What a joke they all made of it, and how happy they were, but the best part was when Mother told them she and Dad thought as they had a house of their own now they would need an animal to drive their cart to market, so Obadiah had been bought for their very own and when he had got fatter he should have a nice little cart to draw his friends about in.

Wasn't that a lovely surprise?

Adam and Ann caught Maimie's hands and they all danced round in a ring, and Adam and Ann shouted "hurrah!" so loudly that Maimie had no breath or chance to explain that long before Obadiah had fat on his bones she would have said goodbye to the Castle, goodbye to Sunny-Home-Tent and goodbye to her dear chums.

When they went into the house, Maimie stopped to look at the letters which lay on the slab. Or, rather, it was one letter she was looking at!

She knew that small, niggly writing quite well, for it belonged to Uncle Reynal.

Maimie gulped down her tears. If Uncle Reynal were

writing to these kind friends at the Castle it must be to say he was quite ready for Maimie to leave them and go to school where she was to live in future.

"I do wish I didn't belong even the teeniest bit to Uncle Reynal," sighed poor Maimie, "'cause I know he doesn't want me, and I don't want him."

She wondered if anything would be said to her about that awful letter, but no notice was taken and everyone was busy talking about a picnic—the loveliest picnic—that was to take place next week.

Maimie dared not ask whether she

would still be here. It made too big a lump come in her throat to think of being gone, for the Castle seemed ever so much more her home now than it had been in Aunt Mary's time.

Ann was rather sad, because she had to go to the dentist. No one likes going to the dentist,

though he was not likely to hurt Ann very much as the loose tooth was so very loose. Adam indeed had offered to play dentist, but Ann had had that experience once and she did not want it twice.

Mother could not go with Ann who looked still sadder when she heard she would only have Maria with her.

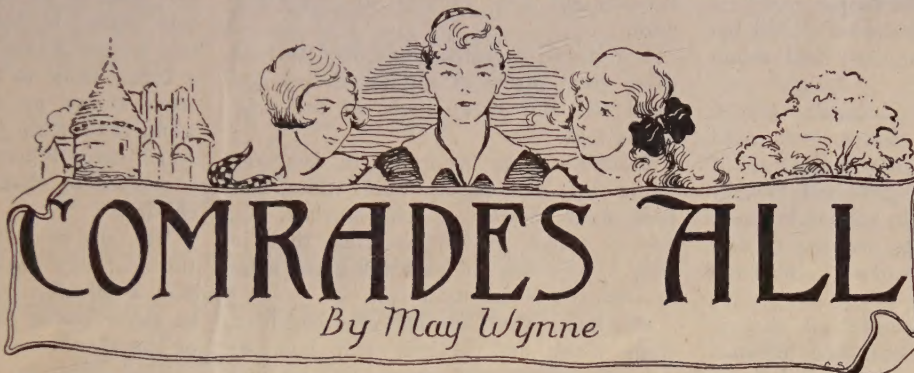
"I'll come," said Maimie; "do let me. I'd like to."

How grateful Ann was!

Adam was not quite so pleased. He wanted to work round the cave and he knew Joe would not be allowed to help as the onions were being harvested. Adam thought caves were much more important than onions!

When the girls had gone he went down to the tent and tidied up. Then he went on to the cave. Joe must have been here working late, for the stiff brambles in front of the cave had been cut away. Adam was no longer dull! He got a rake, raked up all the dead undergrowth, and lighted a fire in a safe hollow. It soon burned out, and Adam stood pondering as to whether he should go and fetch some eggs to roast in the cinders. He knew a lovely way of plastering eggs in clay and then roasting them. He would give one egg to Joe as a reward for his work.

Then all at once the idea of egg-roasting was dismissed. The cave entrance was fairly big



"Hurrah! Hurrah!"



now and he could explore. Oh, what fun! Taking out his beloved electric torch, Adam crawled to the cave entrance. This would be the proper way of doing things. He must get his arms forward, holding the torch, then wriggle himself through. It was quite large enough at the entrance to wriggle easily, and the torch showed him that the cave widened and grew higher inside so that he might be able to stand.

"You've got a long way to go," hummed Adam, as he crawled along the narrow passage, and then—oh! it was such a dreadful feeling and I don't think even Adam himself could have told you how he *did* feel as a quantity of the thick clay soil fell from the passage roof upon his legs below the knee.

It was not a great deal of clay, but the weight was heavy enough to hold Adam a prisoner.

Poor boy! He was naturally plucky and he realized now that he had need of all his courage. It was just as if his head and shoulders, indeed "nearly all" of him was fixed in that dark passage and he could only see the objects shown him by the thread of light from his torch.

And Adam knew quite well that if some of the clay soil had been loosened—as it might have been when Joe cut away the undergrowth last night—more might very soon fall and completely bury him.

And it was quite uncertain when anyone might come to the rescue. Ann's tooth might take a long time to come out, and Maria might have a lot of shopping to be done, nor was it at all likely any of the gardeners would come to the wood.

If he could *only* have moved . . . or shouted. It was the worst part to lie still and wait . . . wait . . . for the earth which roofed the cave to fall. But if he shouted what use would it be? The sound would travel forward into the cave, and even if the echo drifted out into the wood who would hear? And the effort, the reverberation, might help bring the soil down. Dad had once read how under certain conditions an avalanche might be loosened among Swiss Mountains by a whisper. Beads of perspiration broke over Adam's brow as his heart sent up a passionate prayer.

And then, he seemed to stiffen all over, for he had heard Maimie's voice calling him as she ran down the path near. Would she come to the cave, or only look round the wigwam? Would—Oh! Oh! he had heard Maimie's cry of terror and knew she had spied his legs. Adam summed up all his strength and courage.

"Go away, Maimie," he called, "the earth may fall on you. It . . . it might kill you."

Maimie heard—and saw. Yes, she saw more than Adam, for it was quite true that a great piece of the overhang-

ing bank was slowly giving way. And if it fell, Adam would be quite buried.

Maimie thought, oh! such dozens of things in a minute. All her dreams of being a heroine like Silcourt of olden days, all the tales she had made up in her magic attic, seemed to pass through her mind, together with a great surge of love and gratitude not only to Adam and Ann, who had been so good and kind to the lonely little stranger, but also to the Mother, who had put her arms around her and kissed her with real Mother kisses just as if she had been her own little girl.

And I think Maimie felt just the same, tingling her ancestors must have felt in their veins as she fought down natural timidity and went forward to do a brave deed.

For it *was* a really brave deed to take those great pieces of sun-baked clay and loose soil and sweep them off the prisoner's legs.

Maimie's teeth were set in her soft under lip, her cheeks were white, her blue eyes shining as she worked, oh, faster, faster, faster, knowing that in such a very few minutes the great mass of earth overhead must fall.

Oh, thank God! the last clod had been flung away and Maimie had hold of Adam's rubber-soled shoes, pulling him with all her strength.

Hurrah! Hurrah! Adam was able to wriggle now; cramped and painful as his poor legs were he managed that wriggle, but I don't believe he could have been free in time had not Maimie been tugging, too. Though her arms seemed nearly pulled out of their sockets and though her pulses drummed, she kept tight hold of those feet! Tiny particles of earth were falling from overhead. Quick! Quick!

One more effort, and Adam was rolling over and over down the path with Maimie in his arms while behind them came the heavy thud, thud, as the fragment of bank over the cave's mouth collapsed . . .

It was a very dilapidated little boy, soil-stained, dishevelled and white, who crawled round to the back door, nearly scaring Phoebe into a fit.

"Bless me, Master Adam," cried Phoebe, "what, whatever accident has happened to you?"

"Maimie's fainted," said poor Adam in a very weak voice, "in the wood. She saved . . . my life. She . . . she's a heroine." Then he, too, collapsed.

But it was Adam who opened his eyes first, and Adam who told the rather trembling little Mother the story of the terrible adventure; and that was how it happened that Adam's Mother should be kneeling by Maimie's bedside when she began to remember all that had taken place. And the tears were rolling down the cheeks of Adam's Mother as she put her arms round Maimie.

"How's Adam?" whispered Maimie, still frightened and wondering if she really *had* pulled those rubber-soled shoes hard enough.

"Quite well, thank God, my darling little girl," sobbed Adam's Mother, "Ann is taking care of him now, at least . . . I guess they are both outside this door waiting to know how *you* are, for Adam has told us, dear, brave little Maimie, how you saved his life."

And then—well! Maimie couldn't have explained *very* clearly, but she knew Adam and Ann appeared from somewhere, and then everyone was crying and laughing, and kissing, while Maria herself came prancing in, in the middle, with egg and milk and brandy for Maimie to drink. I believe Maria was trying to kiss everyone all round, too, and as Adam said afterwards it *was* a funny show to think of, only it didn't seem funny at the time, but sort of wonderful, with just that touch of awe which made it natural when Mother said a prayer to thank God for saving her children.

Yes, she said *children*, and it was not till next day Maimie reminded her *that* was a mistake. "For you see, I'll soon be never seeing you, or Adam and Ann, or the Castle again," sobbed Maimie.

And what do you think the Mother did? Why, she *laughed*, as she caught Maimie in her arms.

"Do you think this Mammie would ever let her third chick go after what she did yesterday?" she cried. "But it was all fixed before, little one. And if you choose to say 'yes,' why! Uncle Reynel is giving you to us to adopt as our very own, as he has gone abroad to Africa. And so now if you like, Maimie mine, you can be Adam's and Ann's real own sister and live in the Castle just as long as the other birdies in the nest. What does Maimie say?"

Oh! what *did* Maimie say, indeed?

How she kissed and cried, and was kissed and cried over, and then, why! it was she who ran as fast as some lapwing to carry the news.

Hurrah! Hurrah! Isn't that a nice word? So we will leave Maimie, Adam and Ann singing it as they dance round the schoolroom table with Mother and Maria laughing in the doorway.

Hurrah!

### The Birds Say "Thank You"

By FRANCES ANN FISKE

The dear birds are singing, on bush and on tree,  
Their gay and enchanting melody,  
Of summer and sunshine; of birds in the nest;  
Of day time for duties; of night time for rest;  
To the dear loving Father who taught them to sing  
We hear them a message of gratitude bring.





The traffic man is lots of fun  
When home from school I go;  
I feel as big as anyone.  
(That's pretty big, you know!)

He takes my hand and smiles at me,  
Then frowns at all the cars!  
His arm goes up straight as can be—  
They stop, with bumps and jars.

Then we walk slowly 'cross the street  
As if we had all day.  
Our traffic man is hard to beat—  
No matter what they say.

## Waxwing Flying Lessons

By Margaret S. Bridge

**B**ALDY sat on the ground in front of his tent intently studying every move of the sturdy birdling that clung to his finger.

"Where did you find him?" asked the Bird Lady, who happened to be passing on her way from the spring.

"I picked him up over there," answered the boy, pointing to a clump of trees and low undergrowth a few yards to the left of the tent. Do you know what kind he is?"

"Looks like a cedar waxwing, but I'm not sure. If you'll take him back where you found him we can sit here quietly and it is pretty certain that the old birds will soon come to give him a flying lesson."

Baldy followed the suggestion by taking the little bird to a place near the trees, and sure enough, just as the Bird Lady had predicted, in a short time the dapperest bird you can imagine flew down from the cedar tree.

He was larger than a sparrow, but smaller than a robin. His coat looked as if it had just come from the cleanser's, it was so sleek and shiny. The bright yellow band on his tail, the red, waxlike tips of his wings, and the black, velvety band running just below his crest and through his eyes to his beak were marks not easily to be forgotten along with the matchless blendings of yellows and browns of his body.

Shortly, the mother-bird arrived upon the flying field. Except that her crest was less pronounced, the yellow band on her tail narrower, and her coat less

bright, she was very much like the father-bird.

"They surely don't make much noise or get excited," commented Baldy as he watched the old birds take off, and in notes more like a lisp than anything else try to encourage their babies to imitate their flight.

"Their quiet manners and refined appearance have won for them the name 'aristoerat of birds.' They are never noisy even when they get together in flocks—just like the boys in our camp, aren't they?" she asked, with her eyes a-twinkle.

"Yes, when they're asleep," he answered. Then his finger shot out and pointed to a branch on the cedar tree about fifteen feet above the ground. "Look," he indicated, "there's another member of the family."

"Good for you, Sharp Eyes. Quite likely there's a nest in that tree or very near." Someone else had sighted the birdling or had she been attracted by the soft "twee-twee-ze" of her baby, for just at this point Mrs. Cedar Waxwing flew from the ground to help her second child.

Except for the loud clang of a bell and the shout of campers announcing the swimming period the Bird Lady and Baldy might have remained longer as watchers of the woodland's flying field. However, the opportunity for a swim in the lake was quite irresistible. After the swim no trace of the birds could be found, nor could the nest be located. The next day, though, Baldy excitedly announced to the Bird Lady, "I found it!"

"Found what?" she asked as she looked up from her mending.

"The cedar waxwing's nest. Come and see."

He led her to the same tree upon the branch of which they had seen the baby bird the day previously, and by crawling low under the branches and looking upward on a line with the trunk she could see the nest.

"I climbed up to see," said the boy, "and there weren't any more babies in the nest. Don't you suppose there were more than two?"

"Possibly there were three or four that pecked their way through the dark-spotted, purplish blue eggs during the past few days."

"May I get the nest?"

"Do. Now that the family has learned to fly the waxwings will have no further use for it."

The climb upward for about fifteen feet was fairly difficult because of the thick-set branches, but within a few minutes a glad-eyed boy arrived at the bottom of the tree with a rather bulky nest of twigs, weed-stalks and rootlets. It was lined with grasses and feathers. Somehow it did not seem a neat enough house for the trim waxwings.

"I'll put it in the camp collection, shall I?"

"If you will, please. And on the card you might write something of this sort—'Home of the cedar waxwings of the cedar tree near tent four. Deserted July 27, 1929, after the children had learned to fly. Parents, who are gypsy-like in their habits, have likely joined others of their nomad kind and may be located in any new feeding-ground where wild berries or canker-worms abound. Look for them among the cherry trees.'"

## Book Notes

By ELSIE LUSTIG

LITTLE AMERICANS FROM MANY LANDS, by Margot Lucile Ridge. It is many a moon since I have seen such an attractive travel book for young people. To begin with, as soon as you see this book you will want to pick it up and look inside, for the jacket is gay, and on the cover is a colored picture of children from many lands. Can you pick them out? After you have read the book you will be able to identify every figure.

Now look inside—what a pleasant surprise! There are nine sheets of "cut-outs," children from as many countries; all gaily colored, with various costumes.

And then come the stories. These are all varied and interesting. I liked particularly one about Switzerland called "Hans Finds a Brother." This tells about a little Swiss boy who makes friends with an American boy who has been sick and has come to the Swiss mountains to recover his health. The



# THE BEACON CLUB

## The Editor's Post Box

Writing a letter for this corner makes you a member of the Club. Address, The Beacon Club, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass.

136 ALLSTON ST.,  
WEST MEDFORD, MASS.

Dear Editor: I would like to have someone of my age correspond with me. I have been corresponding with Beverly Heckman of Brookfield, Mass. I am thirteen years old and I am in the seventh grade in the Junior High School in West Medford. I go to the Unitarian church; my teacher's name is Mrs. Harry Walker.

Your friend,  
ALLISON BRAYTON.

31 CHESTNUT ST.,  
QUINCY, MASS.

Dear Editor: I would like to become a member of the Beacon Club and wear its pin. I belong to the Unitarian Sunday school. My teacher is Miss Gow. Our minister is Rev. Mr. Whitney. I am fourteen years old and in the fourth grade at school. I would like someone my age to correspond with me.

Yours truly,  
ELEANOR MILLER.

Ruby Richards, 49 Chestnut St., Quincy, thirteen years old, would also like a correspondent.

Three boys who have recently joined our Club are Robert Phelps, ("nearly seven"), Andover, N. H.; Vernon Young (8), 162 Highland Avenue, Wollaston, Mass., and Stuart P. Lloyd, (7), 523 Norton Avenue, Kansas City, Mo.

boys have a great time together, carving wood, and comparing the customs of their respective lands. And the story ends with a wonderful invitation which takes the Swiss boy to America. Besides this there are stories of Japan, Sweden, Ireland, Germany and Russia. You will like all of them.

Probably you have already read some of Miss Ridge's stories in *The Beacon*, so you can know what a treat is ahead for you if you are able to get a copy of this book!

BLUE BONNET'S FAMILY, by Lela Horn Richards, is one of the most refreshing stories of a house-party that I have read this year. Blue Bonnet decides to invite the children of the girls who belonged to the "We Are Seven Club" of her youth, to spend the Christmas holidays with her son and daughter. They all

OUR PURPOSE: Helpfulness.

OUR MOTTO: Let your light shine.

OUR BADGE: The Beacon Club Button.

4846-46-S. W.,  
SEATTLE, WASH.

Dear Editor: I wish to join the Beacon Club and wear its pin.

I hope that someone from the East will write to me.

I am in the Sunday school of the First Unitarian Church. My teacher's name is Miss Pickett and our minister is Rev. George T. Ashley. We have good times in our Sunday school. We are filling a Treasure Chest for the Philippine children. We are Peace Crusaders, too, and speak pieces for a silver medal.

I am ten years old.

Your friend,  
LUCILLE FIGG.

## Cross-Word Puzzle

### Horizontal:

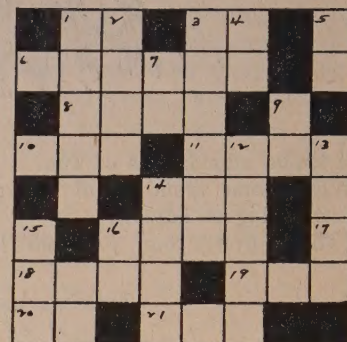
1. A preposition.
3. 19th letter of the alphabet.
5. A personal pronoun.
6. A month.
8. A conjunction.
9. 21st letter of the alphabet.
10. A kind of tree.
11. To behold.
14. To take stitches.
15. 1st letter of the alphabet.
16. A city in Alaska.
17. An article.
18. A small body of water.
19. What we cannot live without.
20. 14th letter of the alphabet.
21. Part of the head.

come, and prove to be very congenial, though of distinctly different types. The scene is laid in Massachusetts at the large estate of the Churchills, and the description of family life in luxurious surroundings is most pleasing. In the beginning of the book Blue Bonnet's daughter, Elizabeth, is a sophisticated and bored young girl with no interests except dancing, diet, clothes and a good time. She objects to her mother's guests, but when they come she capitulates to their charm and has a gorgeous, wholesome time with them. Interwoven in this book are two love stories. Older girls will like to read BLUE BONNET'S FAMILY.

LITTLE AMERICANS FROM MANY LANDS, by Margot Lucile Ridge. Samuel Gabriel Sons & Co., New York, N. Y. \$2.50.

BLUE BONNET'S FAMILY, by Lela Horn Richards. L. C. Page Co., Boston. \$2.00.

## Puzzlers



### Vertical:

1. A flower.
2. A giant of fairy tales (variant spelling).
3. To admire.
4. A thoroughfare (abbr.).
5. A preposition.
7. A pronoun.
9. Above.
12. To take an oath.
13. 365 days.
14. Part of a shoe.
15. An animal.
16. Opposite of yes.

HENRIETTA H. CARY (Age 11),  
Brockton, Mass.

## Answers to Puzzles in No. 33

Acrostic.—LaDle	CaDet
DrEam	CrAve
BaCon	CoYly
MoOse	
PaRis	
MeAnt	
LaTer	
GrInd	
ClOak	
FuNny	Decoration Day

Twisted Names of South American Countries.—1. Brazil. 2. Venezuela. 3. Bolivia. 4. Peru. 5. Argentina. 6. Guiana. 7. Ecuador. 8. Colombia. 9. Paraguay. 10. Uruguay. 11. Chili.

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